

The Renunciation Chapter

by Bob Bruton

Bob Bruton's sermon on Philippians 3 emphasizes the importance of renouncing worldly values for a deeper relationship with Christ.

Duration: 43:32

Scripture: Philippians 3:1-4, Philippians 3:10-14

Topics: "Renunciation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the concept of renunciation and the importance of letting go of worldly desires for the sake of Christ. He uses the example of a woman with a cluttered table of beauty products to illustrate how we often get tangled up in religious practices that do not truly bring us closer to God. The preacher also warns against false teachings and urges Christians to be cautious of those who may lead them astray. He emphasizes the need to worship God in spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus, rather than placing confidence in worldly achievements.

Transcript

You have your Bibles turned with me, please, to the third chapter of Philippians. Philippians chapter three. I suppose all of us have favorite chapters in the Bible, and this is another one of my favorite chapters.

I think I've said that about every night. I suppose every day I have a different favorite chapter. But this is one of my favorite chapters, Philippians chapter three.

I wrote in the margin of my Bible the great renunciation chapter, because this is exactly what it is, especially in the first nine verses. The first nine verses, we see the renunciation of the things of the world for Christ, as far as the unsaved person is concerned. And then verses ten down through verse twenty-one, we see the renunciation of the things of the world as far as the Christian is concerned.

But tonight we want to think of the first nine verses, the great renunciation chapter. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me, indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of concision. For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more.

Circumcise the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, and Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law of Pharisee, concerning zeal persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gained to me, those I counted lost for Christ? Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dumb that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Now again tonight we want to have a little Bible study, and I'm going to ask you to keep your Bible open there, except when we suggest another verse of Scripture, and we're going to go down to verses here, and see what we can learn for us tonight, for those of us in this generation of time, and in this year right here in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Look at verse 1. Finally my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. Someone has said that in verse 1 we see the exhortation to rejoice, and he calls them finally my brethren.

Incidentally the word finally here means as for the rest. It's a word used also in chapter 4 and verse 8, finally brethren whatsoever things are true, etc. And it doesn't mean that he's finishing the book or finishing the letter, but he's just simply changing the subject.

And he calls them his brethren. He's writing to, I believe, the Christians of the day. Also he may be writing to Jewish people of the day, some who were not saved in that Philippian assembly.

But he says, finally my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. And this is the key to, I believe, who he's writing to. He's writing to Christian Jews.

And he says, rejoice in the Lord. And did you know that regardless of what your circumstances may be, if you're in the Lord you have reason to rejoice? I heard someone say one time, how are you feeling to another... I didn't hear them say it, but I've heard it said, that someone said, how are you feeling to another person? And he says, well, I guess I'm feeling all right under the circumstances. And so the Christian remarked back, well, what are you doing under the circumstances? Get on top of the circumstances and see if you can't feel a little better.

For you see, the real cause for the Christian to have joy is not found in the circumstances of this life. It's found in a person. And that person is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that person is not in our circumstances. He is far above our circumstances. He's at the right hand of God in glory.

And he can change the circumstances. And he can give us the strength to go through the circumstances, regardless of how good they may be or how bad they may be. And so we always have cause to rejoice if we're in Christ.

Because Christ is that cause. And our little, old, small circumstances on this earth can affect him and cannot change him in the least. And so he says, finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord.

And then notice he says there in verse 1, to write the same things to you. To me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe. What he's actually saying here is that it doesn't irk him at all to repeat the message over and over again if it is a message of importance because it is for their safety.

Now, if you'll read the Gospels, or at least the Gospel in the Book of Romans, in the Epistles to Corinthians, and in all the various epistles in the New Testament, you'll find that Paul, while he may have been writing to the Christians over and over again, repeats the Gospel message. Gospel, Gospel, Gospel. Why? Because there are certain foundational truths that we have to be reminded of from time to time.

And Paul says, if it's safe for you, it doesn't bother me at all to preach this message and the subject that you need to hear over and over and over again. In fact, for anyone here tonight who has never settled a sin question, if you have never been saved, one thing that will help you more than anything else is to hear the message, and hear the message, and hear the message, and hear the message. And finally, in due time, it may come home to your heart, come home to your soul, and you'll accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior.

And also for Christians, it does us good to hear certain truths over and over and over again. However, some say that when he says to write the same thing to you again, to me indeed is not grievous, he's speaking of what he's going to say in verse 2. For he has three beware's in verse 2. Look at it there. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, and beware of the concision.

Now, some believe that these three groups of people that he is telling the Christians of that church to beware represent the same group. In other words, he's calling the same group dogs, he's calling the same group that are the dogs, he's calling them evil workers, and the same group that represents the dogs and evil workers, he's calling them concision. Beware of the concision.

Well, what does this tell us? Well, I think if you look it up, that you'll find that the word dogs usually are used by the Jews in reference to the Gentiles who have no place before God. But Paul turns the tables around here, and it seems that he's speaking of the Jewish false teachers of the day. And he's calling them dogs because they really do not have the grace of God, they do not have the plan of salvation, and Paul, as we're going to learn, is going to teach that the real believer does have.

And so as the Gentile is to the Jews, so the Jewish false teacher is to the real body of Christ, to those who teach the truth. And he says, beware of these dogs. And I think he's referring here to the Jewish false teachers who were seeking to corrupt the church by ritualism and ceremonies and all the things that go with a number of religious circles today.

He says, watch out for these folks. And as we're going to learn, there is no power in ritualism. There is no power in ceremonialism because the power is in a person, and that person is the Lord Jesus Christ.

You know, as we've said time and time again and looked it up in the Scriptures, there's just something normal about being religious. There's just something that tickles the flesh a little bit to be able to come to a great, elaborate building and see the beautiful stained glass in the windows along the side and to listen to the nice organ music in the background and possibly see someone come out with a black robe on and a reverse collar or a different hat or something else and go through certain religious rituals because it sounds so good. In fact, I've had a number of Christian people who have come from different religious organizations where the ritualism was emphasized, and they say that there is a tickle to the soul.

There is a funny feeling that you get. I remember in Hayward one time I snuck inside of one of these big elaborate churches, and I stood over in the vestibule and I actually watched the people who were sitting in the audience. And those people, through the ritualism of the ceremony that they were going through, they were crying their eyeballs out.

They were just really struck. It so happened that these people were my neighbors. And every Saturday night they had the biggest blast you've ever seen.

I suppose almost every neighborhood has one or two in the community like that. Saturday night it starts about eight o'clock, and they usually close the garage door about midnight, but then they turn up the volume and the record player or the radio goes a little louder and the people start coming around and they have their all-night blast in the community. And I'm so thankful that we moved from that community and we live now where we don't have to listen to that.

And you can hear that music up and down the streets, and you can hear them hollering and cutting up and having their all-night dance, whatever they may be doing there. And it was these very people. And I said to myself as I watched them, now isn't this strange? And an hour later when I saw them, I saw them going down the street smoking like a smokestack, back to normal again, and back to the things of the world.

Why is it? Because it's natural for the soul to be religious. In fact, turn in your Bible back a few pages to Galatians chapter 5. Galatians chapter 5. I don't recall showing this to you before. Galatians chapter 5, in verse 19.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these. Adultery? We know that's natural. Fornication? We know that's natural.

Uncleanness? We know that's natural. Affibiousness? We know that's natural. And then it says idolatry.

Now remember, the works of the flesh are idolatry, and idolatry is a religion. Look at the next word, witchcraft. Again, it's religious, you see.

Drunkenness, revelings, and such like. In fact, every time you find the works of the flesh described in the Scripture, usually there's at least one word that is in reference to religion. And so, you see, sometimes we think that we have it when we have a certain feeling in a room, or when we have a certain wonderful feeling when we go to a church service.

Well, this is absolutely natural, but it may not be spiritual. And so Paul is here saying, beware of these folks that give you a funny feeling. Beware of these folks that have a ritual and a ceremony connected with the way of salvation.

And then he says, beware of evil workers. This is the second beware. And again, it seems that these evil workers had not only taught false doctrine, but they had gained their way into the local church, and they were leading others astray.

They were teaching this evil and false doctrine to others. And then he says, thirdly, beware of concision. Now, we know what the word circumcision means.

Circum means around, and concision means to cut. And circumcision means to cut around. And notice here, he says, he didn't say, beware of the circumcision.

He says, beware of the concision. And this is a term, a takeoff, an ironical term, actually insulting these folks who believed in circumcision, because he's calling them here, beware of the butchers. Beware of those who believe in doing the cutting, and that's all there is.

You see, they had come, and they had taught false doctrine, and they had come into the assembly, apparently right there at Philippi, and they were teaching, now, you must be circumcised. You must keep the law. But all that they were interested in really was the act itself.

I know groups today who believe, oh, you must be saved by faith and baptism. And so if you're not baptized, even though you may have faith, you're not a Christian. And all they're concerned about is not the way your life is changed, but just that you're baptized in the ritual itself.

But Paul is here saying, beware of the evil workers. There's something about false teaching and false teachers. I don't know exactly how to explain it, but always you'll find in the Bible that evil works are connected with false teachers.

And one way to tell the difference between one who is teaching the truth and one who is not teaching the truth is does his life match up to the truth that he is teaching? That's right. One person can stand over here and he says, I have the Bible. And he can look in the Bible and he can teach from the Bible.

Another person can stand over here and he says, I too have the Bible. And he can teach from the Bible. Now how are you going to decide which one is right and which one is wrong if both of them are teaching what they would say according to the context of the Bible? Paul gives you the answer here.

And Peter gives you the answer in 1 Peter 2. The difference is the one who is teaching false doctrine, if you'll look at it close enough, you'll find that his practical life doesn't add up to the teaching that he teaches. Turn in your Bible, for instance, to 2 Peter 2 and we'll see that again. Just briefly over to 2 Peter 2. And we might take this to heart, Christian brethren.

Those of us who would want to be a testimony to others. The only way that you can speak the word of God with authority is does your life match your testimony? Have you ever tried to witness to someone? Have you ever tried to be a blessing to someone? And everything you did, you just got nowhere? Well, it may be that they're watching your life. And what you do speaks so loud that they can't hear what you say, you see.

2 Peter 2, look what it says there. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you. Interestingly enough, you'll notice that he didn't say false prophets.

He changed the word from prophet to teacher. The reason being after the apostles left this life, there was no such thing as apostolic succession. We do not have apostles on the face of the earth today.

The job of the apostles were to give the foundation and to bring the word of God to us. And when it was completed, their job was completed as well. Verse 2, and many, verse 1, among whom, among you who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And then over at verse 15 of that chapter, who have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Boazor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, et cetera. If you'll read that chapter and any other chapter in reference to false teachers and how to distinguish between them, you'll find usually their lives do not measure up to the doctrine that they teach.

And oh, incidentally, back there in 2 Peter 2, when it says denying the Lord that bought them, the word denying there is in reference, it's a word that means not denying Him at all, but denying the Lordship of Christ. You see, even unbelievers, and it says the Lord that bought them, this tells us that Christ died for their sins. They're not saved because Christ died for their sins, but Christ died for their sins whether they believe it or not.

But denying the very Lord that bought them, denying His Lordship, and if we had time to argue a little bit tonight and go back and study 2 Peter 2, we would find that the real characteristics of a believer is to desire the Lordship of Jesus Christ. And the unbeliever, regardless of how religious he may be, when the real test comes, he will not let Jesus Christ have absolute sway, absolute reign in his life. Now back to Philippians chapter 3. He says, Beware of evil workers.

They were teaching circumcision. They were teaching salvation by the law. And he says, Beware of evil workers.

And then he says, Beware of concision. Beware of the surgeons, he's saying. And he was saying that they were more involved, more interested in the operation.

And they were neglecting spiritual growth. They were neglecting the meaning of the word altogether. And I personally think that the churches of our country today would do well to memorize these verses and to keep them in mind.

And beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, and beware of those who are interested more in the ritualism and the traditionalism rather than the word of God. Now verses 3 through 9 really bring us to what we want to say. Legal righteousness and divine righteousness are contrasted.

Look what he says in verse 3. For we are the circumcision. Now here we see what real circumcision means. It's spiritual circumcision of the heart, not physical circumcision of the flesh that God is interested in.

And rather than having three bewares of what is wrong in verse 2, we see three definitions of those who really mean something to God. Look at it. First of all he says we worship God in the Spirit.

Secondly, we rejoice in Christ Jesus. And thirdly, we have no confidence in the flesh. Now let's go back and look at that again.

How do you worship God? In ritualism? No. In ceremonies? No. No.

In acting the part, looking the part, and trying to fool everyone and saying, oh it's so good and so this, that and the other? No. Worshiping God in the Spirit. Do you remember last night we talked about body, soul and spirit? And there is a soulish religion.

But true Christianity is worshiping God in the Spirit and under the power of the Holy Spirit. Not in ceremonies. Sometimes you know we think that if we can play the right music and the preacher can say the right words in a certain manner that's all that's necessary.

Oh no. It's the work of the Spirit that has to be done. And here he says the real circumcision as far as God is concerned is worshiping God in the Spirit.

Secondly, they rejoice in Christ Jesus. And the word rejoice here is the same word for glory. The glory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He alone is the ground for their glory. You know, I'm grateful for the time in my life that I found out that I have not one thing in myself to glory in. All that I have now, all that I ever hope to have in the future, all that I ever want to be, all that I ever want to own, all that I ever, all the places I ever want to go are wrapped up in not me but in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Say, where's your hopes tonight? Who are you glorying in? Are you glorying in the Ten Commandments? Are you glorying in the fact that you're doing the best you can and you're not really a bad person after all? Is all, or is all your hopes resting upon and in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ? And then thirdly, he says the true circumcision of those who have no confidence in the flesh or fleshy advantages or attainment like circumcision or Jewish birth or ancestry or growing up in a certain family or learning a certain doctrine or learning a certain ritual. You see, again, one of the greatest things that you can learn when you come to Christ or even after you've come to Christ is to put no confidence in the flesh. Recently we had the privilege of dealing with someone about the things of the Lord and it was wonderful to hear the individual say, according to the book it says this, he didn't feel it, he didn't work up a funny feeling, but all he knew was it's written in the book.

And this is where you can base your Christianity. This is where you can base your salvation. According to what is written in the book and no more, but thank God no less.

Have you learned to put no confidence in the flesh? You know, I'll never forget when I was first saved, really saved. I said to myself, well now Bob, what you've got to do is read the Bible, pray and keep the Ten Commandments. Now this may sound funny to you, but I said all right, I'll just set right out and I'll keep the Ten Commandments.

Well before I learned to memorize them I was broken. And I got to thinking to myself about the second day after I was saved, now wait a minute, these Ten Commandments are a little harder than I thought they would be. And I set out not to be saved by keeping the Ten Commandments, but I thought that Christians ought to keep the Ten Commandments.

And you know, I found that it's impossible to keep the Ten Commandments. It's very, very difficult. It is impossible.

How are you going to keep from coveting? We covet every day of our lives. Well, the time came in which I had to say, well, the flesh is no good. The flesh can't do it.

And keeping of the law won't save, because all that the flesh can do is break that law. And so Paul says here, those who are really circumcised, those who really belong to God, those who are separated unto Him, are those who worship God in the Spirit. Secondly, their glory is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And thirdly, they put no confidence in the flesh. And it will be a great day in your life, the day that you can put these into effect in your own life. Now look at verse 4. We're coming to a wonderful point here.

Paul says, Though I might also have confidence in the flesh, if any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I am o'er. Have you ever noticed how usually the false teachers and the cults of the day, they're always emphasizing the side of do. We do this, and we do that, and we do the other.

And they have a moral way of life publicly, but behind the scenes, they break the very way of life that they have. But Paul is saying, now listen, if you really can glory in the things that you have done, and in your quality of person, he says, I think that I can qualify for your religion more than you can. Look at verses 5 and 6. You see, these were Jews, but Paul was a Jew too.

And he was a better Jew than they were, and they were teaching false doctrine. Circumcise the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, and Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law of Pharisees, concerning zeal persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Now in these verses, Paul shows that to a preeminent degree, he beats them at their own game.

He possesses natural assets that the false teachers didn't have. Verse 5 at the beginning, pride of ancestry. Circumcise the eighth day of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin.

Pride of orthodoxy, he says, and Hebrew of the Hebrews, as touching the law of Pharisees. Verse 6, pride of activity, concerning zeal persecuting the church. In fact, when Paul was converted, he was on his way down to Damascus to persecute the church.

He really believed way down deep inside that these people who called themselves Christians were wrong, and they were in conflict with the Jewish way, and he was out to persecute them and rub them out, for he could see that if they succeeded, they were the death blow to the nation of Israel and to the Ten Commandments. And so he was out to persecute them when God met him on the Damascus road there. And he says, concerning zeal, persecuting the church, touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Now notice, he did not say here sinless. This verse used to bother me. Paul could say, concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

And I used to say to myself, now it seems to me that Paul is saying here that he's sinless. He never broke the law, but that's not what he said. He said blameless.

In his day, when Paul found sin in his life, he would beat it down to the temple, get the right sacrifice, and make the sacrifice. And that sacrifice, having been made, he would have been forgiven of that sin. He would be blameless as far as the law is concerned.

The sacrifice of the law. And so he wasn't sinless, but every time he found sin in himself, he went down and made the proper sacrifice. But let's go on.

Verse 7, But what things were gained to me, those I counted lost for Christ. And here Paul does it. He makes the great renunciation.

He gives us his own profit and loss statement. And on one side, he lists all the things that the natural heart of man glories in when it comes to religion. I remember one time seeing a television commercial, if you'll pardon the illustration.

And it showed this lady sitting in front of a mirror. And she had a bottle of this, and a jar of this, and a can of that. And all across the top of her table, she had 40 or 50 different types of hairspray or permanent wave in something or whatever it was.

And her hair was all tangled up. It was worse than the beginning. So finally she put one hand down at the end, and she just raked across the top.

I don't know if you remember that or not. I'm not commercializing for any particular type. And finally the person giving the advertisement said, one can of something in front of her.

She says, this is it. This is exactly what Paul is doing here. He's taking pride of ancestry.

He's taking his religious education. He's taking his nationality. He's taking all of his religion, all the culture, all the heritage, all the prestige, all the personal attainment, all of the things that you and I would glory in as far as religion.

And he's wiping them off the table, and he says one thing and one thing only and one word, C-H-R-I-S-T, the Lord Jesus Christ. He gives us his prophet and law statement. It's like a bank account on one side, all of these things that the flesh glories in, and on the other side, one word, the Lord Jesus Christ.

C-H-R-I-S-T, Christ. Now look at verse 8. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ. I want you to notice here that he did not say that all of these religious items were nothing.

That's right. He said they were less than nothing. In other words, to follow religion, to follow a code of ethics, to follow the commandments, or to follow ritualism, or traditionalism, or what mother taught, or daddy taught, or anyone else taught, if it's not written in the book, is not only not helpful, but it's harmful.

So there's a difference between nothing and less than nothing. And again, we'll go back to the bank account to prove it. If you have ten dollars in your account down at the bank, and you wrote a check for fifty dollars, you're forty dollars in the hole.

You're not only down to zero, you're forty dollars in the hole. And so you have to get something to bail you out up to zero. I remember talking to a colored fellow down in North Carolina one time who was a preacher, and he says, Mr. Bob, he says, do you know the difference between zero and nothing? And I said, no, I don't exactly.

He said, well, zero is like this, but nothing is zero with the rim knocked off. He said, nothing. Zero with the rim knocked off.

Well, when you take the rim off of zero, you're right, there's nothing. But Paul says, I count religion. I count all the things that these false teachers are teaching less than nothing.

I'm in the hole. What does this tell us? One of the biggest enemies of true Christianity is religion. Bob, am I hearing you right? That's right.

The biggest enemy of true, genuine, born-again Christianity is religion because it kind of soothes the soul. It kind of halfway justifies the conscience. And as I said before, there's just something nice about looking the part and coming along with mother or coming along with father or coming along with the children to Sunday school and looking and acting the part, and it just kind of satisfies and justifies and soothes our conscience.

But what that is actually doing is holding you back from the real thing. Good is the worst enemy of best if you're content with good. And so what is here, what they're searching for here is really not helping them, but it's pushing them further away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And if there's anyone here tonight not saved, and you're trying to do the best you can, you're trying to be a good father or you're trying to be a good mother, you're trying to look the part and act the part so people won't jump in and preach to you. The fact is the religion that you have is not only not helping you come to Christ, but it's pushing you further and further and further away. The Scripture tells us to put no confidence in the flesh.

And so He says, Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Now this is a Jewish term which simply means for the excellent knowledge of Christ my Lord. And I count all these things but loss that I may win Christ, He says, and be found in Him not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Interestingly enough, Paul here was not suffering anything in the sense that he was sad that he lost all of these things. Religion and status and respect and looking up to, being looked up to by all the people. The word permitted here is, the word suffered is permitted.

He was glad to see all of this go that he may win Jesus Christ as his Lord. Now again, we see two righteousness in verse 9. One, the righteousness which is of the law and the other, the righteousness which is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Turn back just briefly to Romans chapter 7 and verse 10.

Romans chapter 7 and verse 10. We see what happens when we come up against the righteousness which is by the law. Verse 10, and the commandment which was ordained to life, Paul says, I found to be unto death.

Unto death. Did you know that you could not keep the Ten Commandments? Did you know that? Well, why did God give us the Ten Commandments if we can't keep them? He gave you the Ten Commandments to represent His standard of holiness. And when we try to keep these Ten Commandments, we find that we fail.

And so the Ten Commandments do not save us, but they show us how much of a failure we are. And instead of being a law for salvation, they are a law unto death. And so this is what he's actually saying in Philippians chapter 3 and verse 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith of Christ.

The righteousness which is of God by faith. And as we learned night before last, I think it was, the word of here as over in Romans chapter 3 and verse 21, is of and the sense of toward. Instead of, dear friends, you putting your faith in your ability to be saved, in your doing the best you can, in your turning over a new leaf, in your reforming, in your being a good mother or being a good father or being a good brother or being a good sister, being a good son or being a good daughter.

God says, take all of your faith and take all of your confidence in these things. Count these things as rocks in the road. They're getting in your way.

Push them out of the way and take your faith and place it in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let Him be the object of your faith. And the moment you express faith in Christ, the moment you depend upon Him, the moment

you trust Him, the moment you choose Christ instead of your good works, that's the moment that God accounts to you the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And Ephesians tells us that we become accepted in the beloved. John says, as He is, so are we in this world. He's beyond the sin of this world.

He's beyond the corruption of this world. He's absolutely righteous at the right hand of God. And the moment you place your faith in Him, that's the moment that you have the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Now again, our time is up. May I ask very lovingly tonight, very sincerely, in what are you depending upon? On what are you depending to get you to heaven? Your good works? Your religious heritage? Your Christian mother and father or your Christian relatives? Someone says you can be born in a garage, but that doesn't make you an automobile. You can have Christian parents.

You can have a Christian wife. You can have a Christian husband. You can grow up in the local church, but until you make that personal application, there is no salvation for you.

God help you tonight to choose the Lord Jesus Christ and receive Him as your Savior. And then instead of being condemned by the law, instead of being condemned by religion and with religion, you can have the righteousness of Christ. Shall we bow our heads and have a word of prayer? Again, with our heads bowed and with our eyes closed, I trust tonight, this is next to the last night of our meeting time, we'll have one more evening meeting after tonight and these meetings will be over.

And it may be that this is God's final opportunity, God's final call to some of you right here in this room, through the years you've heard it over and over and over again. And from time to time you come right up to the door and you say, yes, I know I'm not saved. I know I need to become a Christian, but not tonight.

And you put it off and put it off and put it off. It could be that tonight and this week is your last opportunity. I have actually preached to people before who put it off and the next night when I looked for them at meeting, I found that they had been killed in the daytime.

And oh, how I wish that I would have run to them and gotten them by the arm and said, listen man, don't put it off one more day. Accept the Lord as your Savior. Choose tonight.

Choose the Lord tonight. Let Him save you. And then enjoy what God has for you the rest of your life.

Why don't you do that? Choose now, just now, for the Lord is here. And angels, your answer, wait. Choose now, just now, while the call is clear.

Tomorrow may be too late. Our Father, we thank Thee for our brief time of study tonight. And we pray, O God, that by the Holy Spirit You will help each of us to realize that we should not put confidence in the flesh, that we should not put confidence in ceremonies or ritualism or traditionalism or anything else that originates with man, but that we should put our faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ there upon Calvary's cross and receive Him, depend upon what He has done for us to save us.

For we know that when we make that commitment, that's the moment we are accounted righteous before Thee. Help anyone in our audience to choose tonight to trust Him, take the emphasis off themselves, and put it all upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Bless the word to our hearts, we pray in His name.

Amen. Let's take our songbooks and turn to number 241. Number 241.

Again, we'll sing the first and last stanza, and our meeting will be over. But I trust that whoever you are, whoever you may be, whatever you may be, wherever you may live, whatever your level of life, God sees no distinction. We're all sinners.

We all need to be saved. And here's the way to do it. Number 241.

Choose the Lord Jesus Christ instead of anything and everything else combined. Shall we stand and sing the first and the last stanza, and the meeting will be over. Someday you say I will see the Lord Someday I will make my way someday Choose not swiftly the seasons roll.

So let's sing the last stanza, and the meeting will be over. Choose not Choose not If there is perhaps just one person, and you say, well, I see it now. All these years I've been trying to do the best I can, thinking and hoping that I could earn my way to heaven.

But this is not it. I see I need to be saved, and you'd like to settle it. Please see me after the meeting.

If you've been saved during the meeting or during these weeks, it would be a real encouragement if you'd just slip up and shake hands and say, Bob, I'd like you to know that I've accepted Christ as my Savior in this two weeks. Or if you'd like to be saved, or if you're interested in any part of the plan of salvation, just slip up and see me and say, I want to talk to you. And I'll be happy to take God's Word and help you see how to be saved.

Maybe you have a personal problem and you still can't quite get over the hurdle. See me after the meeting. And I'll be happy to help you on the authority of the Word of God.

And now, Father, we thank Thee for this time together tonight and we pray that as we have looked into Thy Word, that the Spirit of God Himself will take the message of Thy Word and apply it to our hearts. And anyone here who has never settled a sin question will settle it tonight by taking all the emphasis on self-effort off and place all the emphasis upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. For, Father, we know that when they do that, that's the moment their names are written down in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Dismiss us now as our blessings we pray in Christ's name. Amen. This meeting is over.

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